

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 99

By Moon

A RESOLUTION to honor Senator Lamar Alexander for his lifetime of exemplary service to the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that we should recognize a dedicated, effective, and long-serving elected official and statesman from Tennessee, namely Senator Lamar Alexander; and

WHEREAS, having proudly represented the State of Tennessee in the United States Senate for eighteen years, Senator Alexander retired from that body at the conclusion of his third term in January 2021, having built a legacy in public service that is second to none; and

WHEREAS, a seventh-generation Tennessean, Lamar Alexander was born on July 3, 1940, in Maryville; his father was an elementary school principal, and his mother was a pre-school teacher; and

WHEREAS, during his time at Maryville High School, he served as governor of Tennessee American Legion Boys State and won the VFW oratorical contest and the Buxton and Jaco Cups statewide piano competition; and

WHEREAS, Senator Alexander received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Vanderbilt University, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, editor of the campus newspaper, and president of Sigma Chi; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, he earned his Juris Doctorate degree from New York University, where he was editor of the law review and a Root-Tilden Scholar; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious career, Senator Alexander served as a messenger and law clerk to the Honorable John Minor Wisdom of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit; legislative assistant to United States Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr.; and staff assistant to President Richard Nixon; and

WHEREAS, he served as manager of Governor Winfield Dunn's general election campaign in 1970 and was the Republican nominee for Governor of Tennessee in 1974; in

1972, he co-founded the Nashville law firm of Dearborn and Ewing and in 1976, he co-founded Blackberry Farm, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, in his 1978 campaign for governor, Lamar Alexander walked 1,022 miles across Tennessee, winning the election in November; he was sworn in on January 17, 1979, three days early, by State leaders because of scandals surrounding the incumbent governor, Ray Blanton; and

WHEREAS, as governor of Tennessee, he helped bring the automobile industry to Tennessee by recruiting Nissan and Saturn; sponsored three major road programs; led the nation by paying teachers more for teaching well; and left office with fewer state employees, a AAA bond rating, and zero road debt; and

WHEREAS, he also served as chairman of the National Governors Association and chairman of President Ronald Reagan's Commission on Americans Outdoors; and

WHEREAS, he was a co-founder of Corporate Child Care, Inc., in 1987, which became publicly traded in 1997 and later merged with Bright Horizons, Inc., to become the world's largest provider of worksite day care; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees appointed him to serve as the President of the University of Tennessee, in which capacity he would continue until 1991, when he was named the United States Secretary of Education for President George H.W. Bush, serving until 1993; and

WHEREAS, Lamar Alexander launched his first campaign for President of the United States of America in 1995 and ran for the Republican nomination for president again in 2000; and

WHEREAS, first elected to the United States Senate in 2002, Senator Lamar Alexander rendered sterling service as chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee; he sponsored ninety-one bills that became law, many of which he was the principal sponsor, including the Every Student Succeeds Act, the 21st Century Cures Act, the Opioid Crisis Response Act, and the America COMPETES Act; and

WHEREAS, during his distinguished legislative career, Senator Alexander was elected three times by his Republican colleagues to serve as chair of the Senate Republican Conference; and

WHEREAS, he was one of four senators to receive the Restoring the Balance Award for protecting states' rights in 2013, the first time in a decade that the National Conference of State Legislatures had presented this award to U.S. senators; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Senator Lamar Alexander was the first-ever recipient of the James Madison Award, which is presented by the nation's governors to a member of Congress who supports federalism and the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; Senator Alexander received the award in recognition of his work to secure the passage of an education bill, signed into law in December 2015, that made substantial changes to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman of many talents, Senator Alexander is the author of seven books and a classical and country pianist; and

WHEREAS, after a lifetime of public service to the citizens of Tennessee, Senator Alexander retired to spend more time with his wife, Leslee (Honey) Buhler Alexander, and their four children, nine grandchildren, and dog, Rufus; and

WHEREAS, Senator Lamar Alexander has set the standard for present and future Tennesseans serving in the United States Senate, and his legacy of government of, by, and for the people is the crowning achievement of his brilliant career; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Senator Lamar Alexander for his lifetime of exemplary service to the State of Tennessee as a United States senator and as the State's forty-fifth governor, commend his ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of all Tennesseans, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.